



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **Chicago-area man pleads guilty to arson to intimidate human trafficking victims at Detroit-area strip clubs**

DETROIT — An Iraqi citizen residing in the Skokie, Ill.-area pleaded guilty today to setting fire to the car of a human trafficking victim as an act of intimidation. The victim was one of the Eastern European women who was forced to work as an exotic dancer in Detroit-area strip clubs. The guilty plea was announced by Stephen J. Murphy, U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Michigan; and Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division. This case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other federal agencies.

Duay Joseph Jado, 27, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Victoria A. Roberts to violating the "Interstate Travel in Aid of Racketeering Enterprises" Act by crossing state lines in the Spring of 2004 to commit arson.

According to the plea agreement and other public court records, after a dancer escaped from "Beauty Search Inc.," the corporate cover for the human trafficking organization, a ringleader paid Jado to set fire to the dancer's car. The arson deal was in retaliation for the woman's escape, for her failing to repay an outstanding debt allegedly owed to Beauty Search, and to intimidate other dancers not to follow in her footsteps.

"We will pursue the investigation and prosecution of this human trafficking organization wherever the evidence leads," said U.S. Attorney Murphy. "Human trafficking crimes evidence some of the most brutal and detestable behaviors that one human being can visit upon another. Today's conviction indicates our resolve to bring to justice all participants in this odious sort of criminal activity."

"Sadly, this case is an example of the continued victimization of a woman ensnared by an international human trafficking organization," said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. "Those who use threats of violence and intimidation against human trafficking victims can be certain that ICE and its partners will work to bring them to justice."

With today's plea, eight people have been convicted of crimes associated with this trafficking conspiracy. On March 8, Aleksandr Maksimenko, of Livonia, Mich., one of the ringleaders of the scheme, pleaded guilty to conspiring to violate the civil rights of the dancers through involuntary servitude, as well as immigration and money laundering conspiracies. Another partner of Beauty Search Inc., Michail Aronov, a Lithuanian citizen from the Chicago area, pleaded guilty to similar charges on Sept. 8, 2005. Evgeniy Prokopenko and Alexander Bondarenko, two Ukrainian citizens residing in Brooklyn, N.Y., pleaded guilty to visa fraud on Sept. 9, 2005, admitting that they entered into sham marriages in 2004 with two of the dancers in order to permit the dancers to gain entry into the United States. On Nov. 1, 2005, Anna Gonikman-Starchenko, a Ukrainian citizen living in the Detroit metro area, pleaded guilty to obstruction-related charges stemming from actions taken following the arrests of Maksimenko and Aronov. On Nov. 3, 2005, Niki Papoutsaki, a Greek citizen living in the Detroit metro area, pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony in connection with obstruction-related activity. Finally, on Feb. 14, 2006, Valentina Maksimenko, a naturalized U.S. citizen residing in the Chicago area, pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to obstruct justice during the course of the federal investigation.

Jado remains in custody pending his sentencing. He faces a statutory maximum sentence of up to five years in prison. The parties agreed that under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines an appropriate sentence for Jado is 37 to 46 months in prison.

The government's investigation and prosecution of others involved in the trafficking scheme is continuing. The case is being investigated by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, and the State Department Diplomatic Security Service.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mark Chutkow and Luis de Baca, Senior Litigation Counsels at the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Criminal Section, prosecuted the case. Peter Ziedas, Assistant U.S. Attorney is handling the asset forfeiture part of the case.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*